



**Montgomery County, MD
Commission on People with Disabilities
Meeting Summary Minutes
October 13th, 2010**

Welcome and Approval of September Meeting Summary Minutes:

Aaron Kaufman, Vice Chair, convened the meeting. Mark Maxin, Chair, motioned for the September Meeting Summary Minutes to be approved. John Miers, Commissioner, seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the September Meeting Summary Minutes were unanimously approved as written.

Update from the Chair and Vice Chair:

Aaron Kaufman, Vice Chair, introduced the new members of the Commission.

- **Person with Disability Reps:** Megan Larson and Jennifer Wolfsheimer
- **Agency Reps:** Sheila Langston (U.S. Coast Guard Exceptional Family Mbr. Program), Catherine Mello (Rock Creek Foundation), Lu Merrick (Post High School at Ivymount School), and Cindy Ostrowski (St. Luke's House)
- **Parent Rep:** Susan Hartung

Health Tip of the Month – Immunizations and Pertussis – Darlene Taper, School Health Services

Darlene Taper discussed the importance of flu vaccines and immunizations. She noted there is a resurgence of whooping cough in the United States. She recommended that individuals talk with their healthcare provider before getting a vaccine.

Questions can be directed to School Health Services Center located at 4910 Macon Road, Rockville or call 240-777-1550 (V). Immunizations are for school age children only, but this office can refer other areas in the County for additional immunizations.

Darlene handed out information about vaccinations and flu clinics within Montgomery County:

- [Vaccinations for Adults: You're NEVER too old to get immunized!](#)
- [Montgomery County, Maryland News Release: County Sponsors Flu Vaccination Clinics for Residents](#)

Mark Maxin identified the Commission's Top Two Policy Priorities that he presented to the County Council on September 23rd, 2010:

1. Promote accessible and affordable housing for individuals with disabilities in Montgomery County.
2. Promote the increased employment of people with disabilities within County government and the private sector.

Aaron Kaufman, Vice Chair, noted that the State of Maryland was awarded \$244,000 by U.S. Department of Education Secretary Duncan to improve teacher training so they can better serve students with disabilities.

Election of Officers:

Mark Maxin, Chair, asked for the slate of officers to be presented for appointment. Commissioners Cindy Buddington, Daphne Pallozzi, Marcie Povitsky, and Sandra Sermons had previously been appointed to nominate a Chair and Vice-Chair for the new Commission year. On behalf of the nominating committee, Marcie placed into nomination the slate of Trish Gallalee for Chair, and Charlie Crawford for Vice-Chair. No other nominations were taken from the floor. Marcie motioned to approve the slate of officers. Mark seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the slate of officers was elected as nominated.

Workgroup Announcements:

Seth Morgan, Commissioner and Chair of the Health & Wellness Workgroup, participated over the summer with members of the Commission on Health and the Commission on Aging on End of Life issues. This participation led Seth becoming a liaison to the Commission on Health. He will keep this Commission apprised of issues that arise from the Commission on Health that the Commission on People with Disabilities may also have an interest in.

Roundtable:

Betsy Luecking, Staff, submitted recommendations on behalf of the Commission for the Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) for people with disabilities. There will also be a Health & Human Services (HHS) Budget Hearing for Fiscal Year 2012 (FY12) on November 1st, 2010. This Commission needs to submit budget recommendations for FY12. Betsy asked John Miers to lead the discussion at the next Steering Committee Meeting. Betsy asked Commissioner's for contributions to the Commission's Annual Report as well as thoughts and recommendations for the upcoming year. The deadline is November 1st.

John Miers, Commissioner, worked with the Commission on Aging during the summer on transportation issues and to ensure individuals with disabilities were included in the discussion. He is also working with the Community Health Improvement Process (CHIP) - a community and consensus-driven approach to identify and address the priority health areas for County residents. John will keep the Commission informed about CHIP's work.

Paul Meyer, Commissioner, addressed two changes regarding MetroAccess policies:

- **Effective July 1, the MetroAccess service area was changed in the following ways:**

MetroAccess provides service to locations within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of fixed route transportation services such as Metrobus and Metrorail during the same hours that fixed route transportation services are available. This was considered "the ADA service area" and is now the MetroAccess service area. Customers who traveled outside the ADA service area and hours in FY2010 are permitted to continue to do so under a grandfathering provision adopted by the Board.

- **Starting on November 1, MetroAccess will implement these changes to the MetroAccess fare structure:**

MetroAccess fares will be based on the distance and time of day that a customer travels. The MetroAccess fare will be twice the amount of what the fare would cost on the fastest comparable trip if the same trip were taken on fixed-route services such as Metrobus or Metrorail, up to a maximum fare of \$7. All grandfathered trips outside the ADA service area will be charged the maximum fare. To determine how much a comparable trip would cost on Metrobus or Metrorail, MetroAccess customers can visit Metro's Trip Planner at www.metroopensdoors.com, and enter the origin, destination, time and date of their trip. The MetroAccess fare is calculated by doubling the SmarTrip-based fare for the first itinerary that is generated up to a maximum of \$7. MetroAccess customers will be informed of the exact fare that they are expected to pay for a trip when they book a trip online or with a MetroAccess reservations agent.

Paul suggested that the Commission write a letter to County Executive Isiah Leggett regarding the negative impact these policy changes will have on the residents of Montgomery County who have disabilities. Mark tabled the discussion until the Steering Committee.

Presentation: "Think Beyond the Label" Advertising Campaign and Media Buy ~ Cathy Raggio, Secretary, Maryland Department of Disabilities

Secretary Cathy Raggio discussed several activities that the Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD) has been involved with. In 2009, on the 19th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Governor O'Malley signed an Executive Order designating October as Maryland Disability History and Awareness Month.

Secretary Raggio spoke about the campaign [Think Beyond the Label](#) - a partnership of health and human service and employment agencies with federal grants, coming together to build a uniform national infrastructure and approach that connects businesses to qualified candidates with disabilities. The goal of the campaign is to raise awareness that hiring people with disabilities makes good business sense. Employees with disabilities have unique, competitively relevant knowledge and perspectives about work processes, bringing different perspectives to meeting work requirements and goals successfully. Hiring someone who "thinks outside the box" might be thinking too small when there's an opportunity to hire someone who lives outside the box.

Commercials for the campaign were developed with MDOD and the involvement of Jade Gingerich, Director of Employment Policy. Maryland's Medicaid Infrastructure Grant provided some funds for the commercial. The advertisements began in February, 2009, but have not been shown in the DC Metro area until recently. The commercial will be aired 115 times on 17 different channels including AMC, Discovery, ESPN, ESPN2, History Channel, HLN, Travel Channel, and Weather Channel. Reagan National Airport has wall wraps displayed from September 27th through October 18th. Metrorail is displayed two sheet posters in 45 stations through October 18th. WashingtonPost.com is running ads September 27th through November 1st. The Baltimore and Washington, DC regional editions are running an ad October 11th through the 25th. WTOP FM is airing ads ten times on both October 18th and 25th. The Gazette Business & Politics edition is running an ad on October 15th and 22nd. The Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce was impressed with the campaign and connected with the Maryland Chamber of Commerce who is also promoting this campaign.

Think Beyond the Label Commercial: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iLpwWUKm6KA>

Secretary Raggio discussed other initiatives that MDOD is working on. The Skills2Compete initiative encourages all Marylanders to gain the skills and credentials necessary to obtain jobs with family-supporting wages by obtaining at least two years of education and training past high school. This can be achieved through a career or technical credential, industry certification or a two-year degree from one of the state's community colleges.

MDOD has created an employer portal on their website featuring information, resources and fact sheets for employers wanting to hire individuals with disabilities. Employers can also connect with state and national resources. MDOD has also created a new Transitioning Youth website including information and resources for transition planning, postsecondary education and employment services for families and youth with disabilities.

On October 26th, The Governor's Interagency Transition Council Workshop for transition aged youth in Baltimore County Schools was held. There is concern for students with emotional and learning disabilities that do not qualify for core services and do not go onto secondary education. MDOD is also developing a Train the Trainer Workshop for high school educators so they can provide resources to their students and help them connect to One Stop employment centers. Secretary Raggio noted that the Maryland Workforce Exchange website has 80,000 job listings posted and it is connected to Monster.com.

Mark Maxin asked about materials that MDOD can provide to employers to advocate for hiring people with disabilities. Secretary Raggio said that fact sheets are available for download on the website, or they can be mailed in hard copy upon request. The Medicaid Infrastructure Grant was awarded to the State of Maryland five years ago to promote employment of persons with disabilities. MDOD does not directly operate any employment programs. They are doing outreach to the Department of Labor, Licensing & Regulation and the Department of Economic Business & Development via a shared staff person. Director Gingerich has also been providing professional development and networking with employers.

Kim Alfonso, Commissioner, asked if Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind could advertise the Think Beyond the Label campaign. Secretary Raggio will get in contact with Kim about how to do so.

Charlie Crawford, Commissioner, brought up the issue of MetroAccess' new policy changes. Secretary Raggio said that MDOD has been charged with collecting data and periodically reporting the results to legislature as a result of a lawsuit against former Secretary of Department of Transportation (DOT). While the Department receives data on a weekly basis from Maryland Transit Administration (MTA), there has been difficulty in obtaining data from Washington Metro Area Transit Authority (WMATA). MTA has an on-time performance rate around 90%. Tom Curtis, DOT, participates on the Baltimore MTA Citizen Advisory Council, and Secretary Raggio would like for him to have a liaison at WMATA to keep MDOD apprised of issues.

Sheila Langston, Commissioner, asked if MDOD tracks unemployment of persons with disabilities and those that apply for Social Security Income (SSI) or Medicaid. Secretary Raggio said they do track the unemployment data. Despite

the high unemployment rate for persons with disabilities, the Employed Individuals with Disabilities (EID) Program provides Medical Assistance (also called Medicaid) to working Marylanders with disabilities who meet a few conditions, has shown a 200% increase in enrollment since November 2007. The jobs associated with the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) of Walter Reed are starting to come in, primarily at Aberdeen Proving Ground and the Ft. Meade area. 60% of the jobs will be filled by those relocating to the area. The open positions will require high technical skills and security clearance. Secretary Raggio noted that cyber security jobs are on the rise. Jobs will also become available as the area grows due to the increased population.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30pm

Next Full Commission Meeting: Annual Planning Meeting - Wednesday, November 10th, 2010 – EOB, 101 Monroe Street, Rockville, MD - Lobby Auditorium, 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. ****PLEASE NOTE LONGER MEETING TIME****

Steering Committee Meeting: Wednesday, November 17th, 2010 - 401 Hungerford Drive, Rockville, MD - 1st Floor Tan Conference Room, 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Submitted by: Carly Clem, Office Services Coordinator
Betsy Luecking, Disability Policy Specialist